

Senate Unit Approves Nomination Of Carlucci as Envoy to Portugal

By Barbara Bright-Sagnier
Washington Post Staff Writer

President Ford's nomination of Frank Carlucci to be ambassador to Portugal was approved yesterday by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, despite urging by Rep. Michael Harrington (D-Mass.) that the committee use the confirmation hearings to find out whether reports of CIA efforts to "destabilize" the Portuguese government are true.

Carlucci, a career Foreign Service officer who is currently under secretary of health, education and welfare, has previously served in South Africa, the Congo, Zanzibar and Brazil.

Carlucci assured the committee that there is no secret CIA intervention in Portugal.

"To my knowledge, there is none," he said. Pressed by Sen. Clifford Case (R-N.J.) for clarification of the phrase "to

my knowledge," he said: "That means I know, and I know there is none."

He said further that he would "take issue with any claim that there has been a policy change toward Portugal" since Alvaro Cunhal, secretary general of the Portuguese Communist Party, joined the government last May.

Under questioning by Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey (D-Minn.), Carlucci declined to say whether the United States should give aid to a Portuguese government in which there was Communist participation.

Last April the armed forces overthrew a fascist dictatorship that had ruled for 48 years. The current government plans to hold elections in March for a constituent assembly that will prepare a democratic constitution.

Harrington did not specifically object to the nomination of Carlucci. But he cited news reports that outgoing Ambassador Stuart Nash Scott "had been fired" by Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger because of differing views on how the United States should react to Communist participation in the Portuguese government.

He also ticked off a series of "ominous" clues that he said "give credence" to reports of CIA involvement in Portugal.

These included an August visit to Portugal by Lt. Gen. Vernon Walters, deputy director of the CIA; Kissinger's cancellation of the NATO defense ministers' nuclear planning group meeting; the refusal, thus far, of American aid to the new Portuguese government; and a Portuguese official's comment that the CIA is a "grave problem."